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Letter Progress Report

Barry Drucker
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Minerals Management Service
Procurement Operations Branch MS 2500
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Virginia
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December 14th 2004

Contract No. 1435-01-04-34396

Dear Barry,

This Letter Progress Report (LPR) provides a summary of activities undertaken on the MMS study entitled *World-Wide Survey of Dredging Impacts on Commercial and Recreational Fisheries and Analysis of Available Mitigation Measures to Protect and Preserve Resources* for the period October 1, 2003 through November 30, 2004. This report summarizes the following activities:

- (1) MMS meetings;
- (2) inter-project co-ordination meetings;
- (3) status of deliverables;
- (4) budget status report summary;
- (5) problems encountered and resolution status; and
- (6) planned activities for the subsequent reporting period.

(1) MMS Meetings

The project start-up meeting was held on Tuesday 5th October 2004 at MMS Headquarters in Herndon, Virginia and attended by the following key project team members. Additional MMS staff also attended this start-up meeting.

Person	Role and Organisation
Barry Drucker	COTR – MMS
Dr Rodney Cluck	Project Inspector - MMS
Dr Bruce Tomlinson	Program Manager – Emu Ltd
Jonathan Lewis	Senior Consultant – Emu Ltd
Dr John Petterson	Principal Investigator – IAI



Start-up discussions focused on the background to the project, namely the dredging process on the US Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), the role of MMS within the management of these resources and the need to understand and, where possible avoid conflicts between dredging activity and both commercial and recreational fisheries.

Discussions were also held with respect to the marine sand and gravel dredging industry in the United Kingdom and Emu team members provided a brief outline of this industry as well as some more specific examples of where existing conflicts are being mitigated through a range of appropriate measures.

The potential approach of the project team to assessing fishing communities within the proposed study area was outlined. The role of an existing GIS developed by IAI which contains information on key fishing communities was mentioned in the context of this project.

The proposed study areas were also discussed in more detail. With respect to the Ship Shoal site in Louisiana, the project team was made aware of on-going studies carried out in this area as well as the Louisiana Coastal Areas (LCA) Ecosystem Study which examines issues related to coastal erosion in detail.

It was agreed that the four provisional sites that would form the case-studies would be;

- (a) Ship Shoal, Louisiana;
- (b) Virginia/North Carolina coast;
- (c) Jacksonville Beach, Florida; and
- (d) Hastings Shingle Bank (UK)

Potential dredging contractors that would be willing to participate in the field work were discussed. Barry Drucker provided details of some companies and it was agreed that he would get in touch with these to enquire as to their possible involvement.

The lines of communication during the duration of the project were also outlined and it was confirmed that all technical issues should be addressed to Barry Drucker and that Jonathan Lewis should be the first point of contact on technical issues within Emu Ltd.

(2) Inter-project co-ordination meetings

Prior to the official project start-up meeting at MMS headquarters, members of Emu Ltd (Tomlinson and Lewis) and IAI (Petterson) met to discuss in more detail aspects of the project and project proposal. This meeting was beneficial in that it allowed members of the project team based in the UK and USA to meet face-to-face and to discuss any outstanding issues prior to the first client meeting.

(3) Status of Deliverables

Task 1 (World-wide Literature Search): This Task has been initiated. Emu project team staff have easy access to the Southampton Oceanography Centre Library which acts as the UK's national oceanographic centre. Therefore, the early stages of the search have been able to utilize the facilities at this library. As a result of initial work, a "Preliminary Draft Literature Review" has been submitted to the COTR for early review.

Task 2 (Government Regulations Identification). This Task has been initiated. A summary table has been constructed that lists information for various countries under the following headings:

Legislation; Legislator; Area Covered by Legislation; Materials Covered, Review Procedures; Local & Public Involvement; Role of Other Government Departments; Terms & Conditions.

Task 4 (Site Visits to Fishing, Industry and Government Interests). This Task has been initiated. Letters have been sent to representatives of the UK dredging and fishing industries to request meetings to discuss (a) government regulations and (b) examples of actual conflicts in UK waters. The first meeting was held on Monday 13th December with Sussex Sea Fisheries Committee. Two further meetings are scheduled for December 16th in London, with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Essex Sea Fisheries Committee.

Task 6 (Fieldwork aboard dredging vessels). The planning for this Task has been initiated. Although this is much earlier than predicted in the project proposal, the timescales of this Task (and Task 5) need to be quite flexible in order to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise to travel aboard dredgers and/or fishing vessels. As such, an opportunity arose to carry out initial interviews in early December aboard a dredger (operated by Bean Dredging) working on a borrow area called Brandt Island for Moorhead City, North Carolina. Members of the project team spent the evening of Sunday 5th December aboard the dredger and a good part of Monday 6th surveying the beach nourishment project in action.

(4) Budget Status Report Summary

See attached

(5) Problems Encountered and Resolution Status

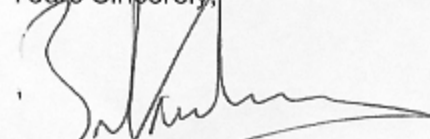
No problems or unexpected events were encountered during the reporting period. Everything continues to be on track for completing the project within the approved schedule.

(6) Planned Activities

In the subsequent reporting period, we aim to undertake the first ethnographic surveys aboard a commercial dredging vessel at one of the US sites (Moorhead City, North Carolina). We also aim to continue the world-wide literature search (Task 1), complementing this with a series of meetings and visits to representatives of the dredging and fishing industries within both the USA and the UK (Task 4). We also aim to continue collating information on government regulations aimed at minimizing the impacts of dredging on commercial fisheries (Task 2). Some of the meetings being planned under Task 4 will complement this Task.

We look forward to your review of this Letter Progress Report. Please let me know if additional information or clarification is required.

Yours Sincerely,



Bruce Tomlinson, Ph.D.
Program Manager

cc: Sharon Teger (CO, MMS Headquarters)
Dr. Rodney Cluck (Project Inspector, MMS HQ)